

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MILI, PEPR, XO, AS
SUBJECT: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD U.S. NAVY
ACTIVITIES IN INDIAN OCEAN

1. SUMMARY: ACTING AMERICAN CONSUL IN PERTH REPORTS
THAT THE PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, SIR CHARLES
COURT, IN A MEETING WITH U.S. NAVY REAR ADMIRAL COUNTS
DURING A RECENT PORT VISIT OF USN VESSELS IN WESTERN
AUSTRALIA, REITERATED HIS CUSTOMARILY ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME
TO U.S. NAVY VESSELS AND STRESSED AGAIN THAT THE USN WAS
ALWAYS WELCOMED IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA. HE URGED INCREASED
USN VISITS TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA AFTER NEXT YEAR'S COM-
MISSIONING OF THE RAN'S COCKBURN SOUND FACILITY, AND HOPES
THAT BASE WILL BE USED BY THE USN FOR MAINTENANCE AND RE-
FIT OF SHIPS AS WELL AS FOR R&R LEAVE FOR SHIP'S PERSONNEL.
END SUMMARY.

2. SIR CHARLES POINTED OUT TO ADMIRAL COUNTS THAT THE
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE WERE VERY
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CONCERNED ABOUT THE BALANCE OF FORCES IN THE INDIAN
OCEAN, ADDING THAT THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN POINT OF VIEW
WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE CONCERNS OF THE CANBERRA GOVERN'A
MENT AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE EASTERN STATES WHICH HE
CHARACTERIZED AS THINKING IN TERMS OF DEFENSE OF ONLY THE
PACIFIC OCEAN AREA AND OF IGNORING DEFENSE PROBLEMS IN
THE INDIAN OCEAN.

3. SIR CHARLES' VIEWS ARE FORWARDED BECAUSE WESTERN AUSTRALIA IS ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S TWO "BOOM STATES, WITH A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT, MUCH OF IT AMERICAN, PRIMARILY IN THE MINING SECTOR. HIS VIEWS ARE CONSERVATIVE AND NOT INFREQUENTLY AT ODDS WITH GOA POLICY. COURT HAS ADVOCATED IN THE PAST THAT WESTERN AUSTRALIA SECEDE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH, FORM AN INDEPENDENT STATE IN ALLIANCE WITH THE OTHER AUSTRALIAN BOOM STATE OF QUEENSLAND.

4. WESTERN AUSTRALIA, THE PREMIER SAID, REQUIRED STABILITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND AFRICA BECAUSE OF ITS EXPORTS TO DURIEPE AND NORTH AMERICA WHICH TRANSITTED THE INDIAN OCEAN, SOUTH AFRICA OR THE HORN OF AFRICA. HE IS CONCERNED WITH THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA, RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA AND IS CRITICAL OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY TOWARD THOSE AREAS.

5. IN HIS VIEW U.S. POLCY WAS NOT BASED ON DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF THE AREA AND IT PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SOVIET INTERVENTIO DIRECTLY OR THROUGH SURROGATES LIKE CUBA. COMMUNIST INTERVENTION WOULD SUCCEED AND ALL OF AFRICA SOUTH OF THE HORN WOULD FALL TO COMMUNISTS WHO WOULD THEN WORK AGAINST THE WEST.

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6. U.S. POLICY, SIR CHARLES SAID, SEEMED TO ASSUME THAT WITHIN EACH OF THE STATES THERE WAS A KIND OF DEMOCRATIC ORDER WAITING TO EMERGE. SUCH AN ASSUMPTION WAS WITHOUT FOUNDATION IN FACT, AND TO OPERATE ON THAT ASSUMPTION WAS SIMPLY TO PREPARE THE GROUND FOR THE COMMUNISTS WHO WOULD WASTE NO TIME IN ELIMINATING THEIR POTENTIAL RIVALS.
ALSTON

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